



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

July 10, 2008

For immediate release

- 1. Big names for a big job – Waller and Pregracke to help with Project AWARE river cleanup**
- 2. Legislative priorities to be discussed at DNR stakeholder forum**
- 3. Flood damaged communities can work with DNR during recovery efforts**
- 4. DNR and FSA program expansion will better protect public drinking water wells**
- 5. DNR to clarify water quality standards at public meetings**
- 6. EPC commissioners change e-mail addresses July 10**
- 7. DNR enforcement actions**

BIG NAMES FOR A BIG JOB – WALLER AND PREGRACKE TO HELP WITH PROJECT AWARE RIVER CLEANUP

MEDIA CONTACT: Brian Soenen, DNR, Brian.Soenen@dnr.iowa.gov or (515) 205-8587; or Jackie Gautsch at (319) 335-1761 or Jackie.Gautsch@dnr.iowa.gov.

DES MOINES – From the bridges of Madison County to the shores of the mighty Mississippi, DNR's Project AWARE annual river cleanup will get a little star power this year.

Best-selling author and Iowa native Robert James Waller will present a program entitled *What the River Has Taught Me* at the Rockford Fossil & Prairie Center at 8:15 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 3. This program, like all of the educational programs on Project AWARE, will be open to the public. A complete program schedule can be found on the Project AWARE Web site at www.iowaprojectaware.com.

Also joining the Project AWARE volunteers will be the man who inspired the event. In the spring of 1997, while still in college, Chad Pregracke set out on a mission – to rid the Mississippi River of unsightly junk. In 1998 he started a non-profit organization, Living Lands and Waters, and since then has inspired hundreds of river cleanup events, including Project AWARE. Pregracke and his cleanup crew are expected to join up with Project AWARE the latter part of the week.

This year, which marks the sixth year of the annual river cleanup event, will tackle about 82 miles of the Winnebago, Shell Rock and Cedar rivers from August 2 to 9. The route will launch from Mason City and float through Rockford, Marble Rock, Greene, Clarksville and Shell Rock before landing in Cedar Falls. Volunteers participate by floating the river in a kayak or canoe and cleaning up river trash along the way. The expedition lasts an entire week, but volunteers may stay and help for as little or as long as they like.

Historic flooding along the route postponed AWARE, originally scheduled for June, creating new challenges for this year's event.

“Cleanup is needed more now than ever on these rivers, and we’re glad that AWARE volunteers can help in the state’s flood recovery efforts,” said Brian Soenen, Project AWARE coordinator. “As the floodwaters have receded, they’ve likely left debris and trash in their wake, and we’re looking forward to help clean that up.”

Registration is required to volunteer on Project AWARE. To avoid a late registration fee, volunteers are asked to have their registration forms postmarked by Friday, July 18. Registration information can be found at www.iowaprojectaware.com.

In the five-year history of Project AWARE, the expedition has sported an impressive track record, enlisting 1,010 participants who have cleaned up more than 400 river miles and four different lakes, and removed over 1,000 cubic yards of trash, of which 85 percent has been recycled. Volunteers have also restored native prairie, renovated trails and enhanced recreational areas.

“Project AWARE is hands-down one of the filthiest yet most personally-rewarding summertime activities in the Midwest,” said Merry Rankin, a five-year Project AWARE veteran.

For more information on this event and to download the registration materials, please visit www.iowaprojectaware.com or contact Project AWARE by email at iowater@iowater.net or phone Jackie Gautsch at (319) 335-1761.

Writer: Brian Soenen

###

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES TO BE DISCUSSED AT DNR STAKEHOLDER FORUM

MEDIA CONTACT: Jerah Gallinger, DNR, at (515) 313-8909

DES MOINES – The DNR is encouraging conservation and environmental organization leaders to attend its 2009 Stakeholder Legislative Forum on July 28. Recommendations for the DNR to consider for its 2009 legislative agenda are also welcome.

“I’m inviting our participants to bring recommendations in order to enter into a more robust discussion of legislative priorities for the DNR,” said DNR Director Richard Leopold.

The forum will open with a welcome from the director, followed by two group discussions, suggestions and summaries of each discussion, and closing comments.

The two discussion groups will be hosted simultaneously, one focusing on environmental protection initiatives and the other on conservation and recreation proposals. Organizations are welcome to have more than one representative in attendance if they wish to take part in both discussion groups.

The meeting will be held from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the DNR’s Air Quality Offices, 7900 Hickman Road, Suite 1, in Urbandale.

Writer: Elise Taylor

#

FLOOD DAMAGED COMMUNITIES CAN WORK WITH DNR DURING RECOVERY EFFORTS

DNR Floodplains program prioritizing flood related permits

**MEDIA CONTACT: Lori McDaniel, DNR, at (515) 281-8094 or
Lori.McDaniel@dnr.iowa.gov.**

DES MOINES —As communities large and small across Iowa continue flood recovery efforts, DNR floodplains staff can provide technical guidance and assist with needed permits.

“We’re giving floodplain permit applications for flood damaged areas top priority,” said Lori McDaniel, who supervises the DNR’s floodplains program. “We’ll be doing our best to help these communities and areas as quickly as we can. We also encourage Iowans to contact us if they’re unsure if they need a permit.”

Permits may be needed for repairs or new construction on levees, dikes, dams, buildings

and wastewater treatment plants, or for removing debris from fields, restoring flood-damaged lands or making changes to a stream channel.

Contact McDaniel at (515) 281-8094 or visit www.iowadnr.gov/water/floodplain/ or www.iowadnr.gov/flood.html to learn if you need a permit or if there is work you can do that would not require a permit.

The DNR is also providing technical assistance to local officials, communities and industries on floodplain issues and regulations.

“Floods will happen. The critical thing is to make sure they have a minimal impact when they do happen,” said Bill Ehm, DNR water policy coordinator. “We’re here to help Iowans as they go through the flood recovery process and work to make long-term improvements for the future.”

The DNR’s floodplains program is just one part of the DNR’s overall assistance during the floods and during recovery. The DNR is also collaborating with other agencies and organizations on floodplain issues.

Writer: Jessie Brown

###

DNR AND FSA PROGRAM EXPANSION WILL BETTER PROTECT PUBLIC DRINKING WATER WELLS

MEDIA CONTACTS: Rebecca Ohrtman, DNR, at (515) 281-0932 or Vickie Friedow, FSA, (515) 254-1540 extension 440.

DES MOINES – More public wells in Iowa are eligible for a federal program that helps protect public drinking water sources.

The DNR and USDA Farm Service Agency have expanded eligibility for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) designed to protect land around public drinking water wells.

The expansion provides a greater potential of increasing protection of Iowa communities’ drinking water sources by enrolling land within a 2,000 foot radius of a public wellhead into CRP.

“This is a great partnership effort that has the potential to decrease contaminant risk to Iowa’s public water supplies,” said DNR Director Richard Leopold.

The DNR’s Source Water Protection program has changed its process for designating wellhead protection, or source water protection, areas. These areas may be eligible for CRP if they have completed a DNR source water protection Phase 1 report for

communities with active public wells. The DNR provides the list of eligible community water supplies to FSA. FSA then determines if the land within the protection areas are eligible for CRP based on cropping history.

“The new designation provides positive options for Iowa landowners as well as community water supplies,” said Derryl McLaren, State Executive Director of the Iowa FSA.

Over the history of the wellhead protection program, less than 3 percent of eligible land has been enrolled. In an effort to better protect Iowa’s community water supplies, the new designation increases the number of eligible public water supplies from approximately 240 to nearly 900.

“It would benefit many of Iowa’s public water supplies to enroll land in the CRP wellhead protection program,” said Lyle Asell, DNR Assistant to the Director for Agriculture and the Environment. “By working with private landowners to make improvements, communities can possibly save their residents the substantial cost of purchasing their drinking water from another source or having to dig another well.”

Landowners who own cropland within a 2,000 foot radius of a public well in an eligible community can enroll that land into the CRP program with a 10- to 15-year contract. This helps protect the drinking water of their community by replacing cropland with grasses or trees.

In return, landowners receive added incentive payments above the regular CRP contract. Interested landowners can contact their county FSA office, their regional DNR private lands biologist or DNR source water protection program coordinator (contact information below) to find out more about the program.

To determine if your community is eligible, contact your local FSA office or contact Becky Ohrtman, the DNR source water protection program coordinator, at (515) 281-0932 or email: Rebecca.Ohrtman@dnr.iowa.gov

A list of USDA-FSA county offices and phone numbers is available at <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=ia&agency=fsa>

More information is available on the DNR Web site at www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/sourcewater.html

A list of private lands biologists is available on the DNR Web site at www.iowadnr.gov/wildlife/privatelands/ or by calling (515) 281-5918

A list of priority and highly susceptible community wells can be found on the DNR Web site at www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/files/swp_map.pdf

Writer: Karen Grimes

###

DNR TO CLARIFY WATER QUALITY STANDARDS AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

MEDIA CONTACT: Adam Schnieders, DNR, at (515) 281-7409 or Adam.Schnieders@dnr.iowa.gov.

DES MOINES – The DNR is hosting six informational public meetings to discuss a proposed antidegradation policy that will protect Iowa's water quality.

In the process of reviewing the policy, part of the state's water quality standards, the DNR will hold short presentations on how the policy ensures that Iowa's high quality waters are protected. The presentations will be followed by an informal session where people can provide input or get their questions answered on how changes might affect them or their communities.

"Generally, the antidegradation policy affects any new or additional discharge proposed by a municipality or industry that is required to have a permit to discharge wastewater," said Adam Schnieders, a DNR water quality specialist. Applicants for dredge and fill permits that require state certification would also be affected.

Regulated industries and cities are required to protect and maintain existing water quality from unnecessary pollution. If a municipality or industry proposes a new or increased discharge, they must consider alternatives to the discharge that would cause less or no pollution, or degradation. They would also have to discuss the project's importance for economic and social development and allow for public participation.

Another component to the antidegradation policy open for discussion is the process for categorizing Outstanding Iowa Waters. These waters of exceptional recreational or ecological significance, would receive a higher level of protection through the antidegradation policy.

The DNR's proposed antidegradation policy and implementation procedures can be found at www.iowadnr.gov/water/standards/antidegradation.html.

The DNR plans to begin the formal state rulemaking process on antidegradation this fall.

The following meetings are open to the public:

Clear Lake:	July 23, Clear Lake Public Library, 200 N. Fourth St., at 10 a.m.
Des Moines:	July 25, Wallace Building, Fifth Floor Conference Room, 502 E. Ninth St., Des Moines, at 10 a.m.
Atlantic:	Aug. 5, Atlantic Public Library, 507 Poplar St., at 10 a.m.
Spencer:	Aug. 5, Spencer Public Library, 21 E. Third St., at 6 p.m.

Manchester: Aug. 7, Manchester Public Library, 300 N. Franklin, at 10 a.m.
Washington: Aug. 7, Washington Public Library, 120 E. Main St., at 6 p.m.

Writer: Karen Grimes

###

EPC COMMISSIONERS CHANGE E-MAIL ADDRESSES JULY 10

MEDIA CONTACT: Jerah Gallinger at (515) 313-8909

DES MOINES-The Environmental Protection Commission will adopt DNR e-mail addresses beginning July 10.

The new address for each commissioner will follow the format firstname.lastname@dnr.iowa.gov. For example, EPC Chairman Henry Marquard's email address will be Henry.Marquard@dnr.iowa.gov.

For full contact information for each commissioner and details on EPC meeting schedules, agenda topics and past events, visit www.iowadnr.gov/epc/index.html.

The members of the commission are Henry Marquard, chair, Muscatine; Charlotte Hubbell, vice chair, Des Moines; Suzanne Morrow, secretary, Storm Lake; David Petty, Eldora; Ralph Klemme, LeMars; Susan Heathcote, Des Moines; Paul Johnson, Decorah and Marty Stimson, Cedar Rapids. The director of the DNR is Richard Leopold.

Writer: Cassy Lalan

###

DNR ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS

MEDIA CONTACT: Jessie Brown at (515) 281-5131.

DES MOINES — The DNR has taken the following enforcement actions. The following are only briefs; please contact Jessie Brown of the DNR for more information at (515) 281-5131. The orders were taken in July 2008 unless otherwise noted.

Enforcement actions, including copies of the original orders and contact information, are available on the DNR's Web site at www.iowadnr.gov/legal/eactions.html. The Web listing offers orders first taken in 2007 or 2008 (amendments to orders issued prior to 2007 are not listed).

Consent Orders

A consent order is issued as an alternative to issuing an administrative order. A consent order indicates that the DNR has voluntarily entered into a legally enforceable agreement

with the other party.

Polk County

- Casey's General Stores, Inc., of Ankeny, agreed in a consent order to implement a free product recovery plan and free product assessment report to the DNR. The consent order is in regard to a release of petroleum from an underground storage tank located in Ankeny.

Ringgold, Taylor and Union Counties

- Whitestone Farms, LLP, of Burnsville, Minn., agreed in a consent order to resolve issues surrounding manure discharge and control violations at several Iowa facilities. Among other actions, Whitestone agrees to submit a list of facilities it owns or operates in the state of Iowa to the DNR, submit a plan of action to ensure any manure releases are reported in a timely manner, and pay a \$5,000 penalty. The facilities are located in Taylor, Union and Ringgold Counties, but are no longer owned by Whitestone Farms.

Sioux County

- Richard Atsma, of Granville, agreed in a consent order to resolve issues with manure discharge from the Atsma Dairy and to pay a \$2,500 penalty. The consent order is in regard to failure to construct and maintain manure control structures to contain runoff at all times.
- Brian Hofmeyer, of Hospers, agreed in a consent order to operate and maintain animal feeding operation structures in compliance with all applicable DNR rules and regulations, and to pay an administrative penalty of \$6,750 and restitution in the amount of \$9,336. The consent order is in regard to a prohibited manure discharge that led to a fish kill.
- Van Voorst Dairy, LLC, of Sioux Center, agreed in a consent order to pay a \$4,000 penalty. The consent order is in regard to improper land application of manure, which resulted in water quality violations.

Writer: Elise Taylor